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DE RUEHJM #1764 2361438
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 241438Z AUG 07
FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8788
INFO RUEHXK/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY

UNCLAS JERUSALEM 001764

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE; NEA/IPA FOR WILLIAMS/SHAMPAINE/BELRADE; PRM FOR PDAS GREENE AND PRM/ANE; NSC FOR ABRAMS/WATERS; TREASURY FOR SZUBIN/LOEFFLER/NUGENT/HIRSON; BRUSSELS FOR LERNER; PLEASE PASS TO USAID FOR KUNDER/MCLOUD/BORODIN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAID](#) [ECON](#) [ENRG](#) [KPAL](#) [KWBG](#) [PHUM](#)

SUBJECT: GAZA ELECTRICITY FLOWS; HAMAS INTIMIDATION GROWS

REF: JERUSALEM 1735

¶1. (SBU) Summary: The Gaza power plant received EU-funded fuel shipments on August 22 and returned to its normal 65 MW of electricity output. According to Gaza contacts, most homes now have 18-22 hours of electricity each day. The electricity shortage from August 19-21 resulted in spoiled food, limited medical care, and a relative halt in economic activity. At the same time, however, Gaza-based contacts report that Hamas forces are interfering more in the daily lives of Gazans. End summary.

Power Back On

¶2. (SBU) EU-funded fuel shipments resumed on August 22 following an agreement by the PA and the EU to appoint an external auditor to review the physical and financial systems in place to prevent Hamas from diverting utility revenues, and most Gazan homes are receiving electricity 18-22 hours per day. From August 19-21, Gaza relied on electricity supply from Israel and Egypt, and received power 4-6 hours per day, according to Gaza-based OCHA representative Hamada al-Bayari. UNRWA Gaza Director John Ging told ConGenoffs via DVC August 24 that the Gaza water supply was returning to normal, as electric pumps began pushing fresh water through backed-up pipe systems - a result of the power shortage.

¶3. (SBU) Al-Bayari told econoff that the power shortages caused most families' refrigerated food to be spoiled, hospitals health services to be greatly limited, and an relative halt in economic activity. He said he had visited local hospitals on August 21, reporting that the hospitals' reserve generators could produce sufficient electricity to power most machines for patients in critical care. He added that air conditioning units had been turned off and lit candles lined hallways and rooms and that all non-emergency surgeries had to be delayed until power was returned.

Gazans Report Increased Hamas Interference

¶4. (SBU) Gaza-based contacts, in discussing the power situation, told ConGenoffs that Hamas forces have been increasingly present in Gaza hospitals, weddings, and markets. One USG contractor in Gaza said that Hamas forces are taking advantage of their absolute power in Gaza by

hoarding hospitals' medical supplies and services for Hamas members, associates, and family members. He referred to Hamas' growing interference in private gatherings, saying that wedding parties in Gaza have been interrupted on numerous occasions by Hamas forces demanding that "Fatah music" be turned-off.

¶5. (SBU) Another Gaza-based USG contractor told econoff August 23 that Gazans' fear of Hamas retaliation for certain political activity has created an environment of fear and intimidation in Gaza - "contrary to the order and peace we read in the press." He said that most Gazans remain relatively quiet only because they fear Hamas' quick vengeance on those who participate in civil protest or dissent.

DUFFY